1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
~~Dhoen Hoss Maria~~

142
291
301

HILL MARIA YOUTH AND GIRL
(Photograph by Baron E. von Eickstedt)

[Facing p. 111]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PLATE V

142
291
301
516

A HILL MARIA, OF THE GOND TYPE
Usendi Muka of Orcha

GROUP OF HILL MARIA GIRLS
(Photograph by Mr. K. L. B. Hamilton, C.I.E., I.C.S.)

[FACING p. 62]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

302 and 5 cm. over the ears; this runs right round the head except just below the hair-knot. It is not the natural edge of the hair, as a little is shaved over the centre of the forehead and a good deal over the temples. From a parting (*paya*) just above this the hair is drawn back, like a European's hair brushed straight back from the forehead over the crown, into a top-knot knotted at the back of the head to hang down considerably lower than the Hill Maria crown-tuft knot. The knot is called *kupa-kelk*. The vernacular words used in describing this coiffure are from the Bison-horn dialect used around Aranpur. I have not seen Bison-horn Marias having their hair trimmed; but they say they use razors in the same way as the Hill Marias.

Women's hair is never cut. The hill women all part their hair in front in the centre and bring it back and down over their ears, the whole of which is left visible, into a great pendulous bunch at the back, like bobbed hair, but with the ends not trimmed off but apparently brought over some kind of stuffing and tucked under it. 301 They wear wooden combs made by the young men and often 302 ornamented above the teeth with patterns worked with criss-cross strands of *kosa* silk. These are sometimes as high as Spanish combs, but never as broad. So, too, the man often wears a comb in his crown-tuft. The Bison-horn Maria women do their hair similarly, but frequently wear round the centre of the forehead and the back of the head a horizontal fillet of plain, thin, polished brass about 2 cm. wide, called *utari*, and over this a snood, almost a tiara, of brass, patterned in relief with hammered suns and moons, vertical and oblique hatching lines, saltires, etc., of which the broadest portion fits closely over the skull between the crown and the forehead, the tapering sides descending obliquely over the *utari*, passing behind the ears and ending in cusps which are linked together under the bun. This is called a *talutar*; it, too, is brightly polished. At its greatest width, where it passes over the top of the head, it is 9 or 10 cm. wide. Some women do not wear both *utari* and *talutar*, but either one or the other; the *talutar* can often be seen hung up on the veranda when the woman is busy in the fields; but in the warm spring and hot weather months when you meet bands of women gathering forest fruits, most of them are wearing their *talutar*.

291 Before I visited the Abujhmar hills I was regaled with the tale told to Glasfurd in 1862 that many of the Hill Marias wore leaves, being too poor to buy any cloth. It was even then a fable; Glasfurd states that he made enquiries about this and was told by the Marias invariably that they had never seen or heard of any people so poor that they covered themselves with teak leaves; however poor they

Dress and ornaments: (a) Hill Maria

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

might be, they could always obtain a small cloth. Of the men, Glasfurd observed only that they were certainly more scantily clad than any he had hitherto seen; of the women, that their clothing, like that of the men, was scantier than that of other Maria women, consisting only 'of a very small cloth wrapped once round the loins', while 'some of the elder women and children wore only a square patch of cloth, suspended on a cord fastened round the waist, upon which bamboo rings were strung'. 291

The Hill Marias are now gradually learning to dress in the same fashion as the Jhorias and Murias of Antagarh or the Bison-horn Marias of Dantewara, and are wearing their loin-cloths, turbans and ornaments. But in the villages of the interior and everywhere among the older inhabitants, the old fashions still survive. The loin-cloth is little more than a length of cloth a foot or fourteen inches broad, twisted or rolled so that it makes a strip round the waist about five inches wide or sometimes much less, passed between the legs tightly, so that in front it seems like a bag for the private parts and that behind it disappears between the buttocks, brought out and wound again round the waist, the end being passed through the waist fold and allowed to hang down over the right buttock; this end is called *toqa* (tail), and in the case of small boys reaches nearly to their ankles, getting shorter as the wearer ages. Above this there should be a girdle of cowry shells, worn so close to the loin-cloth as to be partly concealed by it; but cowries have become unobtainable, now that for forty years or more they have ceased to be currency, and the wearing of the cowry girdle is, as they admit, dying out, though old girdles are jealously preserved. Some wear just a cord instead of the girdle. Glasfurd says that in 1862 Marias sometimes wore, instead of the cowry girdle, a girdle of about ten or fifteen cords of the same form but smaller than those worn then by Gadba women, which he described thus:— [301]

'The girdle is somewhat singular; it is composed of forty to fifty separate cords of about eighteen or twenty inches in length, which are lashed at the ends; it is fastened in front. From the number and size of the cords, this girdle gives the wearer a strange appearance.'

I have not seen anything of this kind among the Hill or Bison-horn Marias of to-day. Sometimes cloth is so short that there is only a cord round the waist supporting a strip of cloth passing between the legs with a flap hanging down over the cord in front and behind. But generally now there is a tendency to widen the loin-cloth, and not to wear much of a *toqa*; it used to fulfil the useful purpose of a bag for receiving grain allotted for food at harvest and feasts, and indeed, the end of the loin-cloth is still so used. The Tokalor clan of Erpanar in Mangnar *pargana* is said to have obtained its [415]

[see col. 116, p. 49. - Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

name because its founder and members, whenever grain was being given out, were found always to have extra long tail flaps (here pronounced *toka*) to their loin-cloths. A broader-woven cloth makes it possible for it to be taken once round the waist in its full unfolded width, so as to cover the buttocks and private parts. The *toga* hangs sometimes over the left buttock, and, in the south of the hills, sometimes in front of the body in the Godavari fashion.

Tucked into the girdle or the loin-cloth are knives with or without wooden sheaths, razors (as already seen), hollow bamboo tubes filled with tobacco, or little tobacco boxes of carved wood or tree-seeds, or of basketry (the last kind is sometimes worn on the left shoulder on a cord passing round the neck and under the left arm-pit); a comb may hang over the buttock from a cord; and occasionally on the Dantewara side a larger knife approximating to the *banda* or dao used by the Bison-horn Marias and Parjas.

The older Marias wear no cloth on their heads, and no ornaments in their hair. But it is general now to wear an apology for a *pagri* or turban consisting of one folded Mahra cloth wound round the forehead and tied at the back of the head. Youths wear between this and the back or side of their heads tail feathers of jungle-cock, hornbill or raquet-tailed drongo (which they stick into their crown-tuft knots if they have no *pagri*). This head-cloth is often dirty and worn, and looks suspiciously like all that is left of an old friend of a loin-cloth.

Men and women almost invariably go unshod; but occasionally a pair of very coarse sandals of untanned cowskin with a thong over the big toe and another over the four small toes is worn, generally only when there is a cut or a heel-crack to be protected from the ground.

Short of complete nakedness, man could hardly wear less than the Hill Maria in his most primitive state. His scanty frontal covering often leaves little to the imagination in its utter inadequacy. But it is to the fact that he wears so little that he owes it that he is far freer from scabies, itch and ringworm than the Bison-horn Maria, and the Murias and others of the plains, who more and more are imitating Hindu clothes, but are too poor to afford either much washing or spare suits. At the numerous State dispensaries these are the commonest complaints, and treatment is useless because the patients will not leave off the dirty, infected clothing. Luckily, coat and 'waskat' are still rarities in the hills; Bardal Chamru of Kutul, the headman or *majhi* of Bardal *pargana*, and his brother Bardal Boranga, who used to accompany me when I toured near their villages, always arrived coated and waistcoated above their loin-cloths, but would discard the obnoxious and unnecessary

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PLATE 91

Full-face, Jugho Chero, of Itulnar

Hill Maria of Handawada
(*Photograph by Baron E. von Eickstedt*)

142
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Kutru Mar youths, wearing *taghali* bark overcoats

[Facing p. 70]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

292 garments as soon as possible. In their youth they had been sent with a party of men and women as exhibits to the Allahabad Exhibition, where Boranga had celebrated his marriage *coram publico Indico*; they brought back with them from Allahabad a bigger suspicion of the *Kosor*, as they, like Gonds all over the Central Provinces, call all Hindus, a coat and waistcoat and blankets, and a taste for *happu* or opium which luckily was not inherited by Baranga's son, the present headman, or any of the villagers.

291 As in Glasfurd's day, the women go with breasts uncovered. Very old women occasionally hobble about inside their huts completely naked. The square patch of cloth suspended between the legs from a waist-cord on which bamboo rings were strung, which Glasfurd saw as the sole garment of some children and elderly women, is the garment known as *mudang*, worn only by females. It is to-day definitely intimate underwear, to be seen by no one save the husband, except in the case of very little girls who, when six or so, wear it for the first time as their only garment. Brass rings made by the Ghasia (Gharwa) brass-workers in bazaar places in the plains such as Gidam, Dhaurai and Narainpur, have replaced the bamboo rings of Glasfurd's time. The cord on which they are strung is sometimes a thin piece of cane. A mother buys a few rings for her little girls whenever she has a pice or two to spare at her visits to the markets; and the cord becomes nearly full of rings when the girl is nubile. The *mudang* cord is never removed, even at child-birth. The cloth attached to it is usually a strip of old rag torn off a worn-out loin-cloth. It has already been stated that women keep it on when bathing. The *mudang* is buried or burned with the woman.

The cord full of rings is obvious under the top of every woman's loin-cloth, as a sort of ridge. The cloth itself is folded over the rings, and hangs down all round over the loins and buttocks, without being passed between the legs. It is therefore not revealing like the men's cloth. Occasionally women wear a small sheet thrown [117] carelessly across the breasts and over the left shoulder in imitation of the custom gradually spreading in the Bison-horn country; and [854] a cloth of this kind is used for supporting a baby, who rides on his mother's right or left hip with the cloth drawn tight over his little buttocks and up to his armpits and thence fastened over her other shoulder. Even for dancing a woman has no other clothes.

● 301 Glasfurd noted in 1862 that few of the Hill Marias possessed the beads that other Marias liked so much. The older men still wear little of this kind; a few have a single necklet of dirty yellow beads made of small chopped sections of pea-fowl's lower leg-bone about 5 mm. in length. Occasionally

Ornaments

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

301 they have similar necklets of little sections of wood or of seeds. The middle-aged and particularly the young have now made up for any former lack of beads by going to the opposite extreme in the profusion and variety of their ornaments. They have borrowed [177] freely from the fashions of the Jhorias and Murias on the one side and on the other from the Bison-horn Marias, but in an eclectic way, and showing marked individual taste. They have no use for the humming-top shaped greenish-yellow glass or the tubular scarlet beads so popular with the Bison-horn Maria, nor for the small speckled beads which Czecho-Slovakia is now sending to the bazaars of the north; they like small primary coloured beads of the old 'hundreds and thousands' type, but large enough to be threaded with ease, while their women still prefer the large, almost cylindrical but rounded-edge pure white beads of uneven size that seventy years ago were the fashion among the Marias of the plains. On the whole the women have borrowed mostly from the Bison-horn fashions, and the men from those of the north, particularly the Jhorias. On their arms the men have tight-fitting armlets of brass or 'jarman' (an aluminium alloy) just above their elbows, from one to five in number. Round their necks they have up to six collars of coloured beads sometimes six-deep, arranged according to individual colour tastes, but generally in vertical bars of colour with alternate bars of white. From large ear-rings 4 or 5 cm. in [304] diameter worn in a slit-hole pierced in the cartilage just below the helix and above the front upper insertion point of the auricle, hang nearly to the shoulders tassels made of three or four strings of beads threaded singly with a similar colour arrangement, ending with little tufts of bright wool; and fillets of the same bead-work are worn either loosely over the forehead and temples, or higher round the crest of the head, or looped from ears to hair-tuft. The intricacy and symmetry of the bright bead-work produces very pleasing patterns; the 'girl friend' usually arranges the beads for the youth. Older men more often wear small brass chains round the ears and hair-tuft than bead fillets. The large ring already referred to is first made in the form of a crescent blade of aluminium alloy, one of the tapered ends being passed through the slit-hole in the cartilage and hooked into the loop formed by bending the other tapered end to form a little eyelet, the remaining metal being then whipped spirally round the metal from which it tapered. Sometimes smaller rings of the same type are made of brass, a blue or red glass bead being threaded just inside the eyelet, and worn in a hole in the 304 tragus of the ear, or the antitragus. Innumerable holes are pierced 301 through the fold of the helix, in which are worn little rings of thin, plain brass wire; there may even be a double row of these right

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

round the whole helix, giving a total of over forty for the ear, and making it green with verdigris. These are called *maqqawadang*. The lobe is pierced and a plug of wood or a rolled leaf worn in it by those who cannot afford something more ornate or are old-fashioned; others fit on to the wooden plugs, by means of a hollow brass socket-stalk, brass circles about 15 mm. in diameter made by the Ghasias by *cire-perdue* process, ornamented with spiral whorls or concentric circles, or like little shields bossed at the centre. Some wear, instead of these, a ring of thick brass or even silver or gold, heavy and fitting closely around the end of the lobe. Lobe ear-rings or plug ornaments are generally called *porskeng*. The effect of these is greatly to distend the lobe. A few rings are worn on the fingers, generally a treble spiral of brass, or a plain aluminium band; the Jhorias are fond of Ghasia-made rings with small brass pellet-bells, but few Hill Marias wear these rings, though many hill women wear strings of such bells round their necks; they also are made by *cire perdue*. It is amusing to see the Hill Maria women haggling with Ghasia women for these bells and other brass ornaments at Dhaurai bazaar. A comb or two, and perhaps a cheap Japanese mirror, stuck in his hair, complete the finery of a young Hill Maria.

The woman wears perhaps one or two bead collars, and sometimes seven or eight bead fillets, as well as bead tassels depending from the lobes of her ears, or from a smaller cartilage-ring of the type already described. She has also ear-plugs with small brass circular plate heads in her lobes, and sometimes little plugs in one or both of her nostrils. She, like the men, wears *maqqawadang* wire rings in the helices of her ears. Round her neck she has ropes of the large white uneven beads already referred to, sometimes ending in a short single string of beads with one or two brass pellet-bells at the bottom. The ropes vary in length, the longest reaching her navel. Over these and the coloured bead collars she has large iron neck hoops or *suta* in Bison-horn Maria style, on which brass rings may be threaded of any number up to 100 or more. She is fond also of necklets of brass circles made by *cire perdue* with spiral whorls like the ear-plug caps; a few plain iron and aluminium hoops may complete her neckware. The beads hang between her breasts, but partially cover them when worn in profusion. On her wrists she has a number of loose bracelets of cylindrical aluminium and brass, and, when she dances, dancing anklets on both legs, arched over her ankle-bones. Her carved and ornamented combs at the top or side of her hair bun add to her finery. Needless to say, much of this ironmongery and brassware is left in the house when she is working in the fields, but she would not be without any of it when she sets off on her long freks to the markets in the plains. Seen

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

301 from behind, it makes her appear very thick-, in fact bull-necked, and creates a false impression of her often slender build.

304 What beauty the girls have they mar to Western eyes by excessive tattooing over all the face and forehead, and often the breasts also. Mothers begin to tattoo their daughters when they are eight or nine years old, using lengths of the brass wire used for the rings in the helix of the ear, sharpened into rough needles, and black charcoal powder. The girl lies on her side with one cheek flat on the ground while the mother operates on the other cheek. Sometimes only one breast is tattooed, often neither. They seem never to tattoo legs or arms, though Glasfurd speaks of their arms and thighs being covered with tattooing. A swastika with the corners slightly rounded and not right-angled, and a pair of very small parallel vertical lines between each arm is a common motive, on face and breast. On the centre of the forehead, vertically one below the other, are usually tattooed a circle with a dot in the centre, for the sun, a circle and a crescent for the full and crescent moon respectively. Thence fairly symmetrically vertical hatching alternates with horizontal round and round the face, becoming oblique at the corners and down the sides of the nose ; and over the corners of the cheekbones three dots are made triangle-wise. This is only one common pattern. The only tattooing on men is single, double or treble horizontal rows of dots, varying in number from three to nine, over the glabella. I did not ascertain at what age or by whom these marks are made. There are no special tattoo marks for the different clans. There seems to be no significance behind tattooing ; it is considered merely an adornment. The Nagpur Gonds speak of tattooing as marks by which ancestors and clan-gods can identify [775] persons in the next world ; but the Marias have no formulated idea of another world.

292 The dancing dress of the Hill Maria men is completely different from that of the Bison-horn Marias and most other tribes. The 535 women have no special dancing dress. The young men wear on their heads either red and white turbans, or, more often, curious Chinese fig-box head-dresses which they call by the Hindi word *topi*, covered with red or blue cloth, and piped at the edges and centre with peacock feather quills. Often a peacock, jungle-cock, hornbill or raquet-tailed drongo's feather is stuck in the *topi*, or spiral coils of feather quill fastened on both sides of a stick ; or scarlet 'Scissors' cigarette packets found empty at the bazaars, lead seals from petrol tins, old brass cog-wheels from watches, little tins, cheap mirrors, the round of bright tin-foil cut out when an airtight cigarette tin is opened ; dried snipe or woodcock neck and skull ; or anything bright-coloured or interesting to the Maria.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

PLATE VII

292
535
301

Hill Maria dancers. Note, in 2, the use of bark rain-coat as dancing skirt
(*Photographs by Mr. K. L. B. Hamilton, C.I.E., I.C.S.*)

Hill Maria dancers, showing dancing-shields and bunches of pellet-bells worn over the rump

A Hill Maria of Kurmer, using his rain-hat and rain-shield, as he works with his *gudari* digging hoe

[*facing p. 74*]

[facing p. 74]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

291 cotton material cut in European style; or instead of these has at least an extra round or two of his loin-cloth which he can throw loosely over his shoulder, or a small cotton sheet to answer the same purpose.

The women's loin-cloth is worn like that of their men, but in front is not knotted in such a way as to make a long flap necessary to cover the front of their thighs; it looks, therefore, like a short skirt from their waists to just above their knees. In the fields and jungles and in their own homes they still go with their breasts uncovered save for their masses of ornaments; but they have become somewhat self-conscious, owing to misguided officials suggesting that it was improper for them to appear like this before their Chief or at high officials' camps; and they frequently, when going to a bazaar or festival, or to dance at a wedding or camp, start off with their breasts loosely covered with a cotton sheet or one or two folds of their loin-cloth wrapped loosely from one hip over the opposite shoulder, their beads and finery resting on top of this cloth. Generally, however, the cloth is too small or too loosely thrown over the body really to conceal the breasts. They have this favourite riddle :— [538]

'Bara pattu lote heren honda podo',

meaning, 'What is the pair of bullocks that cannot be confined within the byre of the twelve parts of the body?' to which the answer is '*Dudo*', or 'Woman's breasts'. They explained this as referring to the refusal of the breasts to be concealed by any wrap. Moreover, as soon as women warm to the dance they rapidly divest themselves of the unwonted wrap.

Most men now wear a *pagri* or turban, tied in the usual fashion of the Hindu population of the adjacent Chhattisgarh districts, and far more ample than the rag worn by the Hill Marias. They do not adorn it with feathers; nor do they wear bead chains or fillets on their heads like the Hill Marias. They use far fewer ornaments; they do not wear the brass wire *maqqawadang* rings in the helix of the ear, but sometimes a single small ring like the tasselled ring of the Hill Marias, but worn in a hole in the cartilage near the darwinian tubercle, from which a small gilt chain depends. In the lobe a small ear plug of gold or gilded brass, often with a little red or green stone or glass set in it, may anchor two or three gilt chains fastened at the top to a similar plug vertically above it in the helix. Most men content themselves with one or two small bead necklaces (*mungya*) round their necks, the beads being all of one shape, scarlet or royal blue tubular glass, or pale green humming-top-shaped, both kinds considerably larger than the Hill Marias'

301 304 301

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

301 favourite beads. They are fond also of necklaces of small, brightly gilded beads, which they call *mirako-mungya*. They may wear one or two armlets (*danda-bhata*) on one arm above the elbow, or a pair of bracelets on one wrist (*ka'i-bara*), of silver, brass, or aluminium, and similar in type to those bought by the Hill Marias. They wear a plain waist-cord (*para-nori*) instead of the cowry-cord of the hills for carrying knives and tobacco boxes. A comb is attached to this, for regular use. They may have hanging from a fastener of aluminium wire, shaped like the eye of the hooks-and-eyes of ladies' dresses, two thin aluminium toothpicks, and an aluminium ear-scoop; the Hill Marias also use these. They hang like a pendant on the chest.

The women's hair ornaments have been described along with their hair-dressing; it need only be added here that occasionally, instead of the polished brass fillet there mentioned, they wear bead fillets like those of the Hill Maria women. Armlets and wristlets are worn on the same arm, and are similar to those of the hill women. Instead of the white-bead ropes and the coloured-bead collars worn by the hill women, they wear long ropes of red, red and green, or gamboge beads; and over these they wear a vast number of the iron and brass rings of the type already described as borrowed by the hill women from them; they here call the iron neck-rings *tiya*, not *suta* as in the hills. Their ear plugs are similar to those 301 used in the hills, but from the lobe plug to a ring worn, as by their 304 men, in a hole in the cartilage near the darwinian tubercle, is often fastened a cord on which is threaded between two blue or green beads a slightly oblong, cube-shaped bead of brass or aluminium. The nose is symmetrically adorned by two gold or gilt rings in the wing of each nostril, and, between them, hanging from a small ring in the septum, a small gold or gilt ornament like a leaf pointing downwards, sometimes with a piece of red glass set in the middle.

292 I have taken the wearing of the Bison-horn dancing head-dress 535 as the most obvious distinction between the two kinds of 'Marias'.

Dancing-dress This is known as a *tallagulla*. I had one made from horns and peacock feathers supplied by me. After my head had been measured round the plane of the temples, a basketry 'cap' was made, fitting loosely round the brows, and sloping backwards and upwards into a low peak. It is made loose, 294 as it has to support the horns and the plume of feathers, as well as strings of cowries and many folds and streamers of cloth of various colours, which subsequently tighten it and make it fit snugly round the head. The basketry is of twilled bamboo strips running diagonally from the edge that fits over the brows. The bison-horns were pared with a sharp knife to remove outer dirt or callosities and

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

PLATE IX

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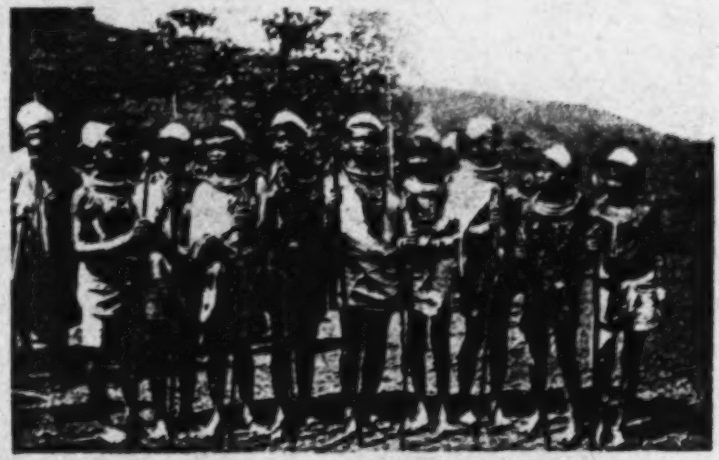


BISON-HORN MARIA DANCERS AT BAILADILA

Above Four men. *(Photograph by Mr. K. L. B. Hamilton, C.I.E., I.C.S.)*

Below Women. Note the clothes, the masses of ornaments, and the *tirdudi* bamboo dancing-staves

[FACING p. 80]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PLATE XI

482
142
291
301
415

HILL MARIA WOMEN CARRYING GOURDS OF WATER

HILL MARIA WOMAN CARRYING A LEAF-BOX OF GRAIN

(Photographs by Baron E. von Eichstedt)

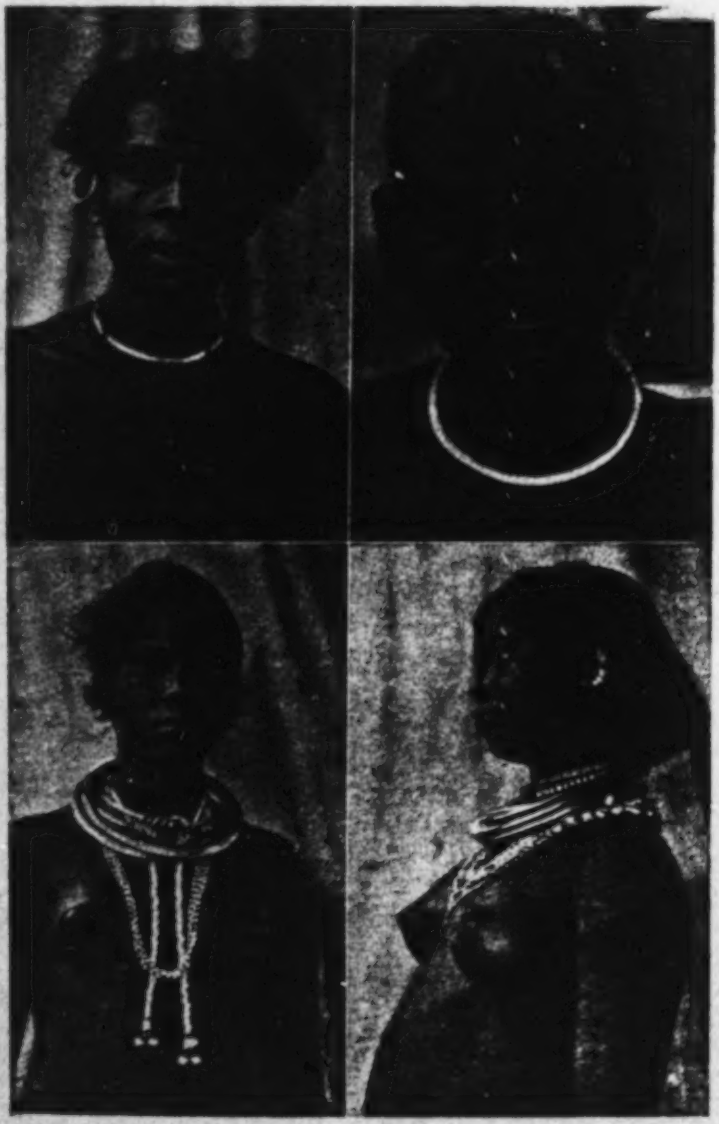
361
342

BISON-HORN MARIA VILLAGE STREET, TELAM, NEAR KATAKALIAN

[FACING p. 118]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PLATE XVII



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HILL MARIA TYPES

Above Arki Baiyya of Korawaya — Gecha Poia of Chudala Tondawada
Below Jugho Buke of Ituinar — Guma Ewado of Goti

[FACING p. 226]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

PLATE XVIII

142
291
301
304
302

BISON-HORN MARIA TYPES

Above Markami Harma of Burgum Markami Joga, headman of Burgum

Below Mase, wife of Markami Muka of Kakadi

[facing p. 240]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

142
301
304

585

The pouring of water over the bridegroom and bride at the Bison-horn Maria wedding described at p. 258

An old Bison-horn Maria from Gudra, between Katakalian and Kuakonda

[face p. 254

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

241 to the Telis, send relays of young men to earn the needed cash by
426 working at Allapilli, and it is noteworthy that these workers do not
621 regard the wages thus earned as their individual property, but as the earnings of the village which sent them there and provided them with food for the journey. Let us hope that the economic self-sufficiency which has hitherto kept these hillmen out of the clutches of the money-lender will be preserved (which means that their *penda* must not be stopped). They are subject, however, to three pests. The
661 first is the frequently corrupt *kamdar* of the zamindar. The second are the village watchmen or *kotwar*, generally of Mahra or kindred untouchable castes, to whose circles these hill villages are attached. These Mahras have their headquarters in plain villages, whence they make periodic tours of the hill villages to levy various illegal dues from the Hill Marias. The third pest is the itinerant
439 cloth pedlar, usually a Mahra, who supplies cloth on credit and then tries to levy a perpetual tribute in kind. I met one of these men in this tour during my visit to the adjacent Bastar village of Nelanguri. Bazaars are so remote that these pedlars, if they could be prevented from selling on credit, and be made to charge reasonable prices, would fulfil a useful function. All these abuses could be checked by effective official touring: Mr. Kerawala's and my visits were unfortunately red-letter events in the Marias' lives.

535 Dancing at Kuvakodi was all in the traditional Hill Maria
292 style, but sadly inferior to dances at such Bastar centres as Orcha or Handawada, although at least half the dancers were Bastar Marias. But even in physical type these Marias from the western fringes of the Abujhmar Mountains are inferior. Here, as I noted of Bastar during my March 1934 visit, the Maria dancer has given up the rib-dress or *gatiharhana*, the dancing-shield and the gay head-dress and skirt, though he still retains the traditional buttock-bells, the songs, the *pata-bhita* or 'song fellows' and the dance-steps.[1]

535 The descent back to the Lahiri camp was almost more tiring than the climb had been. Lahiri that evening was full of an eager crowd, to watch the dancing and partake of the liquor that was ready for the dancers. Here the dancing was lively and vital, but differed in various ways from Hill Maria dancing, if of Hill Maria type. The
534 *dol* drumming was marked, even though the single-membrane *turam* drum more typical of the Hill Maria was much in evidence.
●301 Perhaps, however, the strongest impression was the astonishing wealth of 'jewellery' worn by the girls: enquiry showed that apart from strings of beads, almost all the silver and brass and aluminium necklets, armlets and other trinkets worn by the women had been purchased from metal-workers in Bastar State. There seemed here

[1] See pp. 75-6 and 183-4.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

to be a definite infiltration of Bison-horn Maria influences from Bastar. The illustration in this Supplement shows some of the Lahiri Maria girls and gives some indication of the quantity and Bison-horn style of the ornaments.

Before climbing to Kuvakodi I had sent some Marias up the valley to Nugur village in Kutru Mar, on the Indrawati banks, to invite to my camp the Kuruk boatmen who had taken Dr. Mitchell and myself in their canoes in November 1927, down the river from Nugur to the Jitam rapids.[1] Tati Ogha and Rajintappa, the leaders of our 1927 ' fleet ', and several of the boatmen arrived at Lahiri that evening, and recognized me, after thirteen years, with tears of joy. They were received and made at home with the utmost courtesy—that almost stately courtesy so characteristic of the Gond, whether of Marias at a feast or of Betul Gonds receiving the bride's party at the bridegroom's village; although the Bastar Hill Marias look down on Kuruks or ' Jharaman ' (netters), the Lahiri headmen could not do enough for these Kuruks, giving them the best of the food, refilling their leaf-cups with *mahua* spirit, and showing a real delight when I tied a *pagri* on each Kuruk's head, and presented them with cloth and beads, while they insisted on the strangers getting the best places from which to watch the dancing.

The motor journey from Lahiri to Surjagarh, about 59 miles in all, involved a return on our outward tracks through Bhamragarh to a point three miles east of Pirmeli, thence roughly north or north-west through Kandar, Burgi and Markel villages to Chukmitapalli, and thence due east through Hitawara to Surjagarh; despite a very early start we reached Surjagarh after dark, thanks to ' receptions ' in every intervening village and, above all, to delays for treating yaws patients. All these Maria villages have excellent human material, and some surprises for the visitor. At Burgi, for example, a boy dashed off to his house to emerge as a uniformed boy scout! Some years before an attempt to start a boy scout movement in Ahiri zamindari had met with some initial success, but had apparently died out. Yet this boy had carefully preserved his uniform in a leaf-box, and, more hopeful, he and some other boys had preserved the memory of the lessons they had had on cleanliness and hygiene and in a minor way were still influencing the villages to carry out what they had learnt. It is often assumed that the Marias and similar men of the backwoods have never seen anything of the outer world. Comparable with the visit of a party of Bastar Hill Marias to the Allahabad Exhibition mentioned on page 71, was the fact that this boy and some other Maria youths had been taken two or three years before to a scout jamboree at Delhi. When I asked

[1] See p. 164.

I: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

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Muchaki Pándu, Bison-horn Maria of Gogonda with hunting-horn

Bison-horn Maria of Lakhopal

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[End Plate B]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

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Mariaiyi Hiraga, Bison-horn Maria headman of Marandia

[End Plate C]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

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Elwin

Elwin-born Maria youth of Kakker in Hill Maria festival dress

[End Plate D]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

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●301
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Hill Maria children

Verrier Elwin

142
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Muchaki Kondi, Bison-horn Maria girl, of Bergum

Verrier Elwin

[End Plate F]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

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Bison-horn Maria girl of Mohlipal

[End Plate 6]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

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Group of Maria girls from Lahiri, Chanda district

W. V. Grigson

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Hill Maria mother and child

Warrior Elwin

[End Plate H]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

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Bison-horn Maria girl brings in the harvest

(Verrier Elwin

[End Plate J]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

● 301
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[Verrier Elwin

Jugho Chero, of Ituinar, shown in Plate VI (*facing p. 70*), photographed ten years later

[End Plate Q]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

142
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415
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The chiefs are amused

[frontispiece]

142
●301
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ABOVE: Motiari of Sirpuri, showing method of arranging combs

BELOW: The Gujaru, Sulk and Mularo of the Barko ghotul

[p.12 (A)]

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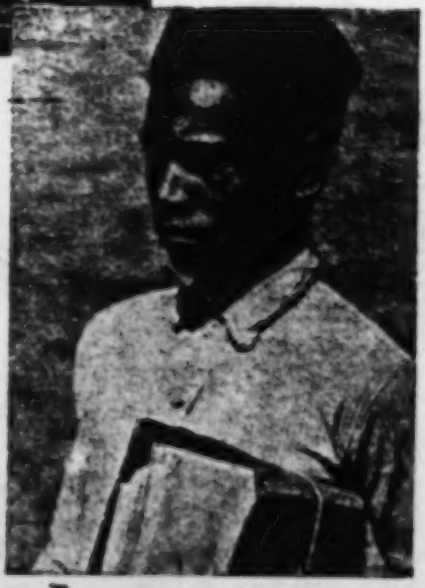
Plate V



A study in contrasts. The two boys are brothers, but one goes to school

[p. 18 (a)]

Plate VI

142
291
301

Nari, the priest and landlord of Nayanar

[p. 18 (B)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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142
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Motiari of Munjmeta listening to the gramophone

[p. 30 (A)]

241
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● 301

Chelik of Bayana? digging

Plate XII

The Meiya of Phanda spinning rope

[283]

[p.44(B)]

2. Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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Two motiari from Kapsi

Plate XVI

The Belosa of the Bhanpuri ghotul

[p. 60 (B)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

584 agrees, they accept the liquor brought and drink it together. If the parents are unwilling, but the girl desires the match, it is said that they usually have to give in to her.

Here too they offer liquor on leaves to the Departed inside the house and watch the leaves to see whether the omens are favourable or not.

At the next visit, the boy's parents bring four baskets of rice and more liquor. The boy's mother washes the girl's feet with liquor and offers a ring. In some villages they drop liquor in the rice-husking cavity; in others they make an offering of cowries or their equivalent to the Pot of the Departed. As they do so, the boy's father says, 'O Departed, accept this offering. We take this girl into our clan and give you cowries in her stead'. At Esalnar the people said that in the old days the Duga sept used to give five cowries, and now give fifteen pice, and the Sori sept used to give three cowries and now nine pice.[1] These are put into the Pot of the Departed. From this day the girl is regarded as belonging to the clan of her betrothed, and must obey its rules and taboos. In some places it is considered proper that a girl should go, even before marriage, for New Eating ceremonies to her future husband's house.

At Chimri I was told that as the boy's parents go home, the motiari stop them and demand 'ring-cowrie', a small present of rings or cowries to compensate the ghotul for the loss that it will suffer when the girl is married. In other places, this is done during the marriage ceremony.

●[301]

Fig. 17. Brass rings with small bells attached
Actual size

At this second visit, the bride-price is fixed. If the engagement is made many years before marriage the boy's parents generally pay an annual visit to the girl's house, taking her presents of liquor and ornaments.

[801] The bride-price should be in terms of odd numbers, three, five, seven or eleven. Even numbers are *jori hi jori* and so unlucky: you must have something over a pair. The number nine is also unlucky: a man may die of it.

There are many games about this betrothal ceremony and it is often mentioned in the songs; during their slow tedious dance round the marriage-booth the chelik sing a mixed Gondi and Halbi song about it.

[1] The Muria clans do not now appear to worship different numbers of gods, but the above practice suggests that perhaps they once did. Ward says that the Gond marriage contract was generally to the effect 'that the father of the bridegroom elect should give the father of the bride as many rupees as he worships Deos (the latter never exceed nine in number, but vary from that number to five)'.—H. C. E. Ward, *Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Mundlah District* (Bombay, 1870), p. 136.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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585

Bride at Amasara with braided hair

[p. 94 (a)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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Motiari attending the bridegroom at Nayanar

[p.102 (A)]

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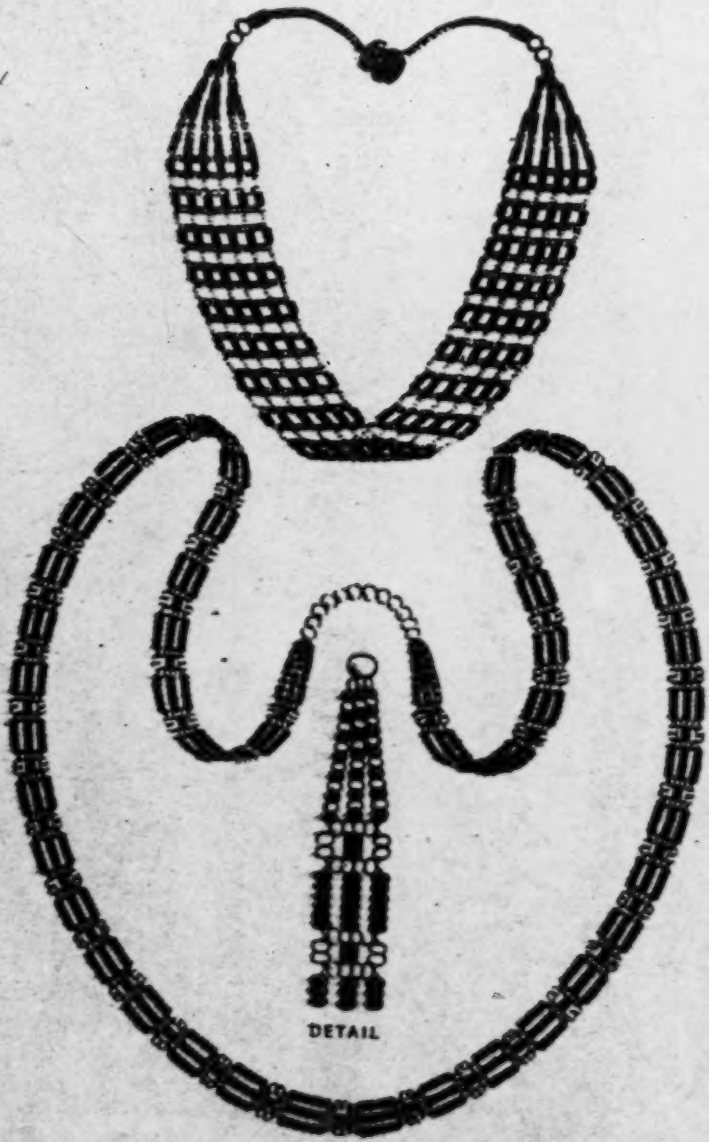

TYPICAL JHORIA NECKLACE AND HEAD-BAND FROM MARKABERA

[facing p. 125]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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towards the end, I did not once see them strained or quarrelsome. Their tremendous vitality kept the thing on the move and made everyone cheerful and happy.

In return for all this work, the chelik and motiari seem to get very little, one meal a day and a little liquor. The bride and bridegroom distribute small keepsakes, rings and beads. The motiari of the bride's ghotul demand and receive four annas as *mundi*-cowrie. The chelik also demand a new mandri drum from the bridegroom in compensation for the loss of one of their girls. They are generally given eight annas instead. This present is called *sakta*. The boy also has to give *chilkul*-cymbals, or four annas, to his own chelik.

People treat the chelik and motiari with great respect, for there is great fear of offending them—a strike, which is not unknown, can upset the entire proceedings. It is

[301]

DETAIL

FIG. 23. *Chapaki-mundi* necklace, from Kuntpedar, of red, white and blue beads
Length 5' 8"

[831] noteworthy also that there is no exchange of obscenities between the older people and the ghotul members. When the old women smear their dirty hands on all available male faces, catching hold of their private parts or pouring haldi over their buttocks, they never do it to the chelik. It would be considered equally shocking for a married man to poke his stick at a motiari

The Nero of the Tarhalli ghotul

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Plate XLI

Two great friends: Pilsai and his horse at Sidhawand

[p. 204 (A)]

142
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Plate XLIX

Uraon dhangar

Uraon dhangri

[p. 242 (A)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32

Plate I.

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Iype, a Hill Maria girl of Bolimori

[p. 242 (B)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Bison-horn Maria

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Bison-horn Maria girl from Godra, Bastar State

[p. 278 (a)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Bison-Horn Maria

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Hirmo, a Bison-horn Maria girl washing her hands

Plate LIV

Bison-horn Maria dancers

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 A W32 Gond A W32
Muria
Oraon AW39

Uraon dhangri

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Plate LXVII

Motiari of Kongera grinding

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301
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[B 330(4)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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● 301
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Phirtu, the Chowkidar of the Maseva ghotul

Plate LXIX

The ghotul near Malakot

342

[p. 338 (N)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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FIG. 63. Karajarner necklace from Palli. The beads are dark blue

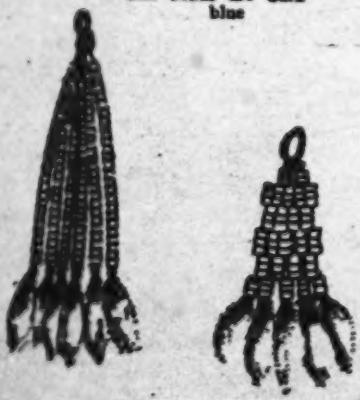

FIG. 64. Jhoria ear-drops from Nayanar, of red, white and blue beads, with small tufts of red wool at the bottom

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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to Dorga the attractive title Chelik-sunder. Then the Sirdar called the leading boys aside and they whispered together for a few minutes. The Sirdar went to the group of girls, picked up two of them and brought them into the middle of the company. He lifted each in turn and hit her with his clenched fist. To the first, Sukmi, he gave the name Jankai and to the second, Pakli, the name Mankai. This was all done, as it should be done, in the presence of the people, in the face of the village elders, who yet by an absurd fiction are not supposed to know that such a thing as a ghotul name exists.

301]

FIG. 63. Ear-ring with pendant of red, blue and white beads
Actual size

The motiari now did Johar, first to the Sirdar, then to all the chelik and elders and visitors, but not to any women. Then the Sirdar, followed by the three boy initiates, did the same. This is the only occasion when the Sirdar salutes his 'subjects'—it is a kind action, to make the little boys feel at home. It is the last time the initiates perform the Johar rite. After the Johar, the Sirdar gave a little sermon to the new boys. He waved a siari stalk round them three times and said, 'Bear this *kāwar* [pole for carrying loads]. Serve the [ghotul] government. Give food to the official and the stranger. Serve and feed your father and mother. Now you have a new name. Grow up quickly and live till you are an old man.' He put rice-marks on their foreheads and gave them a leaf-cup of liquor. In Aturgaon, the leader gives the initiates a ring, but this was not done here.

In many villages, when he gets his name, the initiate gives a bottle of liquor to the ghotul, of which he then becomes a full member. He is then excused the tiresome duties of childhood. He no longer has to bring wood daily: he no longer salutes anyone. But in some places, the little boy has to continue doing this even after he has got his title until he is 'grown up' and makes a formal offering of liquor to the ghotul. For a girl, a title means less change, for she still has to salute the boys every night and perform her obligations in tobacco, leaves and cleaning. But boys and girls alike gain a new dignity,

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

352
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Chelik of Toinar with his ghotul 'wife'

[p. 364 (W)]

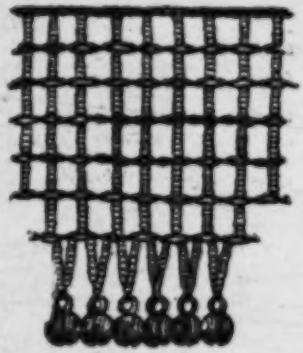
2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

AN EVENING IN THE GHOTUL

THE ghotul is very literally a night-club; it is only in the evening that there is 'a noise in the belly of the elephant'; during the day, except on festivals, it is deserted. The real life of the ghotul is in the firelight.

The conventions and routine of a ghotul evening are almost everywhere the same. I have spent a hundred evenings in all parts of the Muria area with the chelik and motiari and have found, on the whole, a remarkable similarity of custom. The Muria explain this by saying that all ghotul have developed from the first house at Semurgaon where Lingo himself prescribed the routine that should be followed.



DETAIL

In the afternoon, motiari come to sweep, clean and cow-dung the buildings and court-yard. Their grass brooms are soon raising clouds of dust; rubbish is collected in basket or winnowing-fan and thrown away; cow-dung mixed with water is spread by hand over the floor. At sunset, someone often comes to arrange and light the fire; where there are no matches to light your pipe or lanterns to show you your way about, a fire serves more purposes than warmth and is needed even in the hot weather.

At any time after supper, it may be from 7.30 up to 9 p.m. according to the season and the circumstances of the village, the chelik begin to arrive.

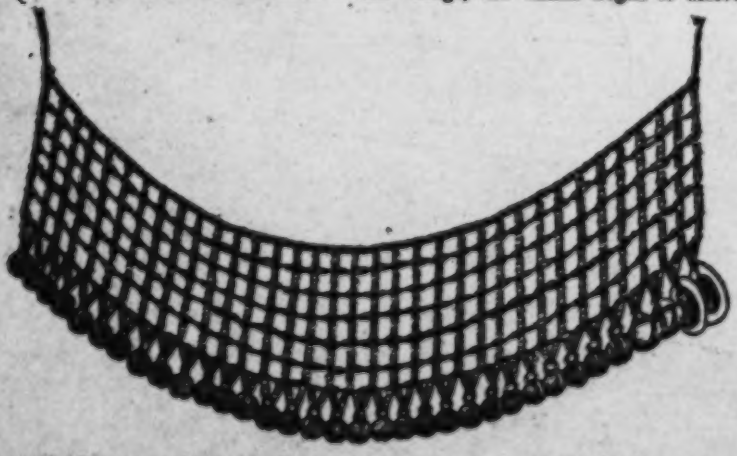


FIG. 66. Bead belt with bells and cowries from Ramawand. The beads are blue and white

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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māma' and so on. As they give the salute they stretch out their hands, sometimes both hands, lower and then raise them in a pretty gesture. Often

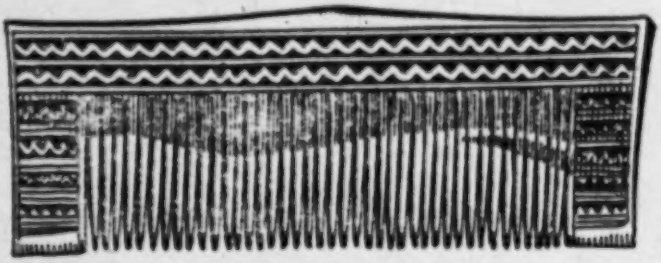

Fig. 67. Carved wooden comb from Toinar
Length 6"

they only use one hand, laying it on head or shoulder; in the east of Kondagaon they put both hands on the head.

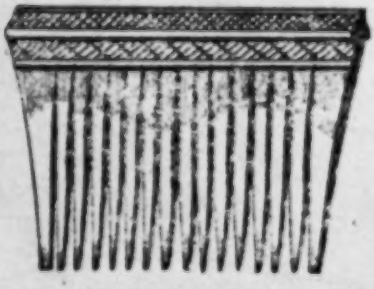

Fig. 68 A comb from the Narayanpur Tahsil
Width 2¾"

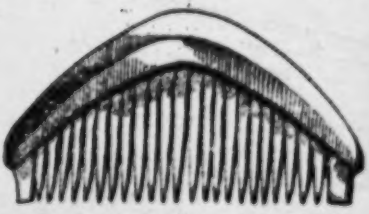

Fig. 69. A comb from Phulpar
Width 3¼"

When the boys have finished, the motiari go round in the same way, with the same gestures and salutes, generally speaking in high, almost artificial voices. In Phulpar the girls did not say Johar, but repeated the ghotul title twice, thus—'Gaita, Gaita' or 'Kotwar, Kotwar'. A girl should not salute a boy to whom she is betrothed or her Lamhada, and she must be very careful about using the proper terms of relationship—for by this means she is reminded of the tribal laws of avoidance. In some ghotul this ceremony is performed twice, once when the company first assembles and

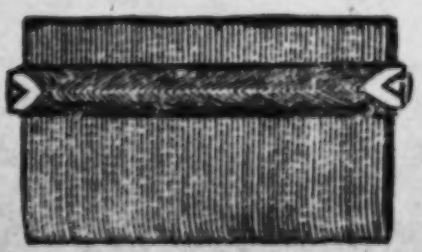

Fig. 70. A bamboo comb, of a type sometimes made by Muria for sale in the bazaars
Width 2¾"

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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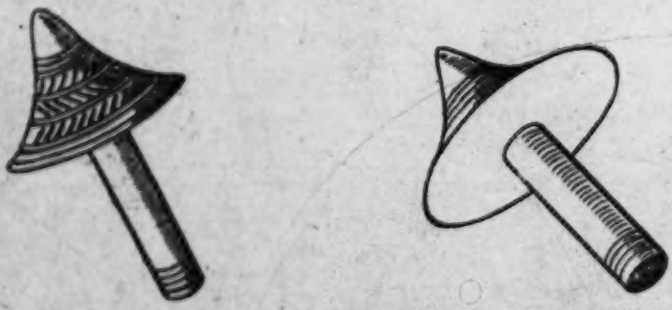
FIG. 71. The *pusai hoji* or cat's footprint necklace. The beads in the centre are white and red and the cat's footprint itself is made of white, blue and yellow beads. The rest of the necklace is composed of a number of beads, orange, brown, pink, mauve, green and scarlet
Length 18"

FIG. 72. The *hupe hoji* or rat's footprint necklace of blue and white beads
Length 31"

FIG. 73. Carved wooden ear-plugs from Kanhargaon



2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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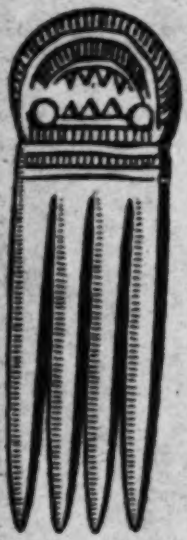


FIG. 74. Comb of a type often used in the Abujhmar foothills
Length 3½″

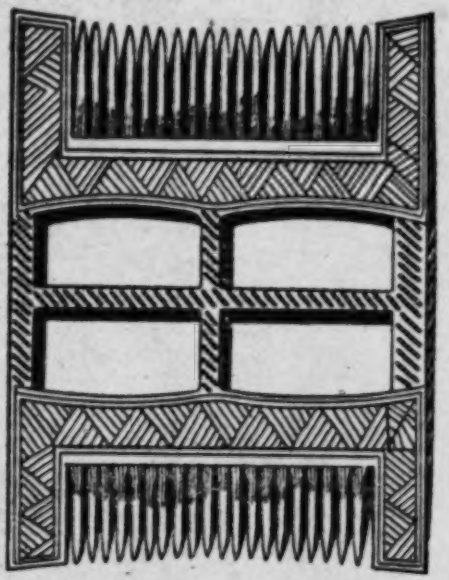
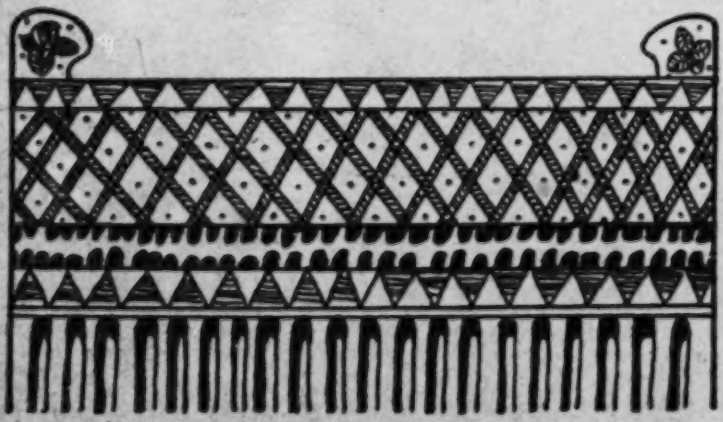


FIG. 75. Double comb from Bhanpuri
Height 4¼″



From Paul Schebesta's article 'The Decorative Art of the Aborigines of the Malay Peninsula' in *JRAS* (1929), p. 758
FIG. 76. Malayan comb
(*See p. 568n*)

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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513

each other's arms on the sleeping-mat. They often have to lie very close together; sometimes two boys have one girl between them; many of the couples actually touch each other. In the big ghotul real lovers and those who intend to have sexual intercourse may go and sleep in the smaller huts in the compound.

In ghotul where the motiari always sleep in the ghotul, bedtime is a simple matter of routine. In places where they only stay on sometimes, they go singing to their own house or verandah. When they are not sure what to do, they stay on till the Sirdar says, 'Well, girls, are you going to sleep here or are you going home?' The Belosa answers, 'It's very late, I think we'd better stay here' or 'There's a tiger about, it's not safe to go'. The Sirdar says, 'Then go to your mats at once and don't keep us awake any longer'.

[276
531]

FIG. 77. Tobacco-box in the shape of a wheel
Width 4½"

In Chandabera, the boys told me that the girls often said, 'Let's go home tonight' and ran away. But if a boy was anxious to sleep with his girl, he would ask the Kotwar to keep them and he always did.

FIG. 78. Comb with carved leopard
Width 5"

[301
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FIG. 79. The *kansul-gota* or tortoise box
Height 4"

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

I. Dress and Fashions

THE chelik and motiari, as we have seen, pay a lot of attention to their charming persons, so much attention indeed and of such a varied nature that it is not easy to describe their fashions in a single chapter. But the task is made somewhat easier by the tradition of ghotul solidarity. To be in the fashion, according to Muria ideas, it is essential that all the girls of any one village should look exactly alike. They must have the same coloured cloth round their loins, the same ornaments in their ears, the same bangles on their wrists, the same kind of beads about their necks. The Belosa sets the fashion and all her subjects follow it. There is a little more latitude allowed to boys, especially to the leaders. The Malik of Jungani can wear a wonderful comb fashioned with a chelik and motiari on horseback; the Kotwar of Chandabera can have a tobacco-pouch shaped like a fish in his turban; the Manjhi of Kabonga can go about with a beautifully-carved wooden bird perched on the comb in his hair. But girls cannot do that sort of thing; for them originality is bad taste.

There are five main fashion areas—the villages along the northern border, the Jhoria of the south and centre, the Muria of the north-west near the Abujhmar, the villages round Kondagaon and along the main road and the eastern forest approaching the Jeypore boundary. Each of these areas has its own special style.

There are, however, certain general observations that may be made of Muria everywhere. All Muria wear the same kind of cloth. It is taboo for a Muria to weave, and most of their cloth comes from the local Ganda and Mahara weavers. The cloth is good, but unenterprising, generally plain white with a red stripe or band. The chelik rarely wear a dhoti; all they can usually afford is a loin-cloth tied round the waist, passed between the legs and allowed to hang down in front. Well-to-do boys use a broader cloth that covers the buttocks, but most leave them bare and only conceal the private parts with a narrow strip that forms a sort of bag.

Girls wear a small cloth, supported back and front by their waist-string, to cover the private parts. Over it they wind round the loins a small strip of cloth like a very short skirt, carrying the end up and over one shoulder so as somewhat to conceal the breasts, and tucking it in again behind. In the Jhoria and north-western parganas, both breasts are often left exposed when no stranger is near, and nearly always one breast is visible—a fact that gives point to the riddle: 'The cow-shed is twelve cubits long, yet the two cows can't get inside.'

Muria boys and men usually wear a turban, and this varies not so much from a desire to be in the fashion but according to what one can afford. The classical Muria turban is tied round and round to form a sort of box on the head; in eastern Kondagaon the overhanging flaps are carefully decorated with coloured fringes. This box is rightly so named, for it not only covers the head, but serves as a receptacle for combs, mirrors, leaf-pipes and anything else that a boy may wish to take about.

Neither motiari nor married women cover their heads in conventional village fashion. It is a mark of a Muria girl that her head should be proudly free.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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Fig. 80. Bird-comb from Chandabera
Height 4½"

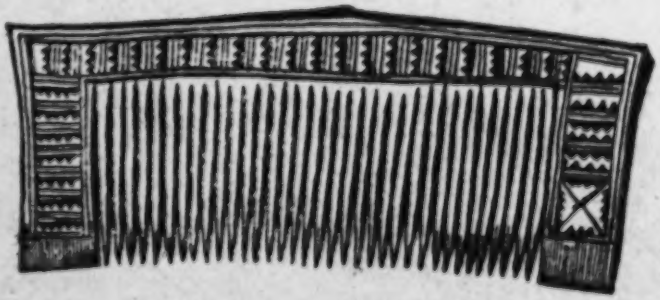

Fig. 81. Comb from Bhorpal
Length 5½"

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

The Muria everywhere are at the mercy of the merchants in the bazaar, though these are not entirely indifferent to popular demand. They supply cheap aluminium armlets and anklets, glass and lac bangles, aluminium and silver neck-bands, the *kauri* necklaces of rupees known throughout Central India, and many varieties of beads. Muria chelik and motiari buy these in the bazaars and wear them. They indicate nothing except perhaps the way in which the natural taste and intelligence of the aboriginals is degraded in the interests of big business.

We may now turn to the special ornaments worn by the Muria in the different fashion areas I have named. We will begin with the Jhoria, for these are the most distinctive and interesting of all the Muria.

The Jhoria, as we have seen, are simply Hill Maria who have settled in the foothills. You can distinguish a Maria from a Jhoria girl by her breasts so charmingly displayed and the tattoo marks less charmingly marring the beauty of her face. It is not so easy to distinguish between a Jhoria chelik and a young Hill Maria boy.

Like the Hill Maria, the Jhoria give the impression of being a little over-dressed.[1] They are 'dolled up', smart, tight, fresh, alert, vivacious—altogether charming. Their clothes are worn tightly round their bodies, revealing the grace and energy of the figure. Their ornaments and especially their necklaces do not hang about them, but are drawn tight round their heads and necks. The feathers in their hair give them the perky bright appearance of young birds.

Most striking of all are their gaily coloured bead decorations. They wear head-bands, sometimes three or four of them, round the head, keeping the hair in place. Round the neck are two or more broad bead collars and a profusion of necklaces; their beautiful and elaborate designs are fully illustrated in the colour plates in this book.

Jhoria boys and girls wear ear-pendants of coloured beads (Fig. 64): some girls also wear large circular shields (*dhâr*) without the usual chains, or home-made wooden *hinua* (Fig. 73) covered with silver paper.

Bangles are not made by the Muria, and those worn by boys or girls are the usual bazaar products.

Rings play an important part in ghotul life. A boy or girl on being appointed to high office is presented with a ring: at a marriage the bride and bridegroom give rings to their old companions: a ring is buried in front of the Gaita's house before a Deo-Dandar or Pen Kolang expedition and is later given to the leader of the dance: rings are collected at a festival and offered to the clan-god.

The rings are of brass or aluminium: some are decorated with little bells (Fig. 17). Girls often wear a great many which the boys beg them to remove before beginning the massage.

Girls often wear rows of combs in their hair, with thick bunches of cowries,[2] and balls of red and green wool. Both chelik and motiari love to put flowers in their hair or over their ears.

The Jhoria chelik wear cowrie belts just above their loin-cloths. There seems no shortage of these; they may be found everywhere. Sometimes the son of well-to-do people wears a broad silver *kardan*, bought in the bazaar, of a kind used by girls.

[1] The word is W. V. Grigson's; it exactly describes my own impression—if such a phrase can be applied to people who hardly wear any clothes at all.

[2] For the use of cowries, almost universal in Bastar, see my article 'The Use of Cowries in Bastar State', *Man*, Vol. XLII (1942), pp. 121–4.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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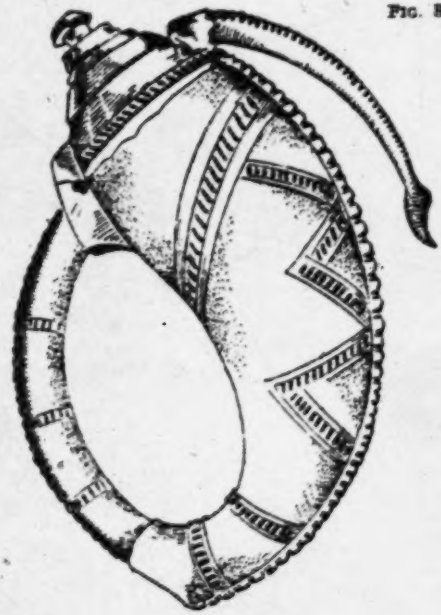

FIG. 82. Tobacco-box from the Mardapal Pargana
Height 5"

FIG. 83. *Kalsi-gola* from Borpal
Height 7¼"

FIG. 84. *Dudong-gola.* A small tobacco-box 'as round as a girl's breast'
Height 1¾"

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

In the north-west, in the villages of the remote Partabpur and Paralkot areas, where Hill Maria influence is still strong, the chelik of the Paralkot area distinguished two types of necklace: the cat's foot pattern and the rat's foot. (Compare Figs. 71 and 72.) Some of the motiari here wore necklaces usually characteristic of the Hill Maria, with large white beads, and little bells at the end. I have seen motiari with both breasts exposed in Maria fashion, though others have been very fully dressed in smart red saris. Head-bands are not worn, but boys and girls stick flowers and feathers in their hair. The girls usually have few combs.

FIG. 85. Jhoria head-band of red, blue and white beads

One may still see necklaces and head-bands of fibre, either sago or date palm, carefully made (Figs. 87 and 88).

To move north from the Jhoria country is to receive an unforgettable impression of drabness. The bright head-bands disappear: the smart tight bead-collars yield to floppy monotonous necklaces. The beads are big, cheap and red; almost everything is bazaar-purchased. One particularly misses the girls' decorations. The Kalpatti, Serebahi, Antagarh and Amabera are the least colourful of all the ghotul parganas. Contact with Chhattisgarhi Gond has ruined their taste and destroyed their artistic enterprise.

Round Kondagaon and along the main road, the chelik and motiari have a charm of their own, though there is little in their dress or ornament to emphasize it. Both wear a great many necklaces, of red and white beads, getting the effect from quantity rather than from anything artistic in the design. They distinguish the *gīr-gatti*, a necklace of small black beads, *moti-māla*, made of white beads, *jug-jugi*, of red and white beads, *jāl-mungiya*, of red beads, *tan-suta*, a decorated neck-band and *kāri*, a thin black necklace.

Occasionally you will see a solitary head-band; girls often have masses of combs.

In the ears, the motiari wear cheap yellow *kinwa* from the bazaar, or *dhār* shields. The boys have little brass rings in the helix.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

301 The cowrie belt is almost unknown, but the chelik carry strings of cowries, bells, beads and tobacco-pouches at the waist.

In this area, the girls have either floppy brass *pairi* slipping down over the heels, or the thick heavy brass *tin-kor* above the ankles.

Finally, in the extreme east of Kondagaon, the chelik recapture something of the aesthetic attractiveness of the Jhoria. Once more elaborate necklaces of small red and blue beads appear; a head-band of cowries and black sago palm fibre is often worn (Fig. 89). The chelik's turban is specially attractive: 291 it is tied straight round into a box with one flap hanging over the top, the other falling behind. The boys themselves attach pretty fringes of pink, mauve and red tassels to these flaps.

For protection against rain, all the Muria make large round hats of leaves placed between a double bamboo framework, and long shields of the same material to hang from their shoulders. In a few villages near the Abujhmar they make the *tarali*-cloak of strips of retted bark characteristic of the Hill Maria.

II. Hair-dressing

302 The hair has the greatest emotional and artistic significance for the Muria. You may have the most beautiful features, the fairest colour, the finest figure, 832 but if the hair is badly dressed you will not be thought attractive.

Care of his hair is the first and simplest service that a motiari can render 302 to a chelik; it is during the hair-combing in the evening that friendships become intimate and proposals are made; wherever she is, in camp for a marriage or 515 festival, resting in the heat of the day while working on the roads, or just 524 sitting in the house, a girl takes any chance she can of cleaning a boy's head, and examining it for lice. 'the thousand babies housed in a dry tree', 'the black cows that live in the thick forest, bothering everyone and drinking red water', 'the tigers that breed so quickly in the jungle'. She catches them with the end of her comb, or with her fingers, and kills them with thumb and forefinger. 'Ten went to hunt', says the riddle, 'but two did the killing.'

302 The chelik keep their hair fairly long. A straight fringe is cut across the forehead, and from the parting above it the hair is brushed back and tied in a bun usually covered by the turban. Some of the Muria living under the shadow of the Abujhmar follow the Hill Maria custom of shaving the whole head except for a patch on the crown which is carefully combed back and tied in a knot.

The chelik cut and trim their hair once every month or so, when the motiari who comb it tell them to. They cut and shave each other's heads with small razors made by the village Lohar. The motiari keep their boys closely shaven as to their chins, but they seem to like a good moustache. There is no other reason for shaving: the Muria, except those who have begun to imitate Hindu customs, do not shave at funerals or other religious occasions.

Girls do not cut their hair. They part it down the centre, and very carefully smooth it down and back. Behind the head they wind it over the small wooden blocks called *kunjar balla* (Fig. 91) which are carved for them by the chelik, and tuck it in underneath, fixing it in place with the *kunjar koto*, beautifully made wooden pins (Fig. 90)—also the gifts of chelik—to which are often attached bunches of cowries, coloured wool or strings of beads.

Both boys and girls treat their hair with oil, generally oil specially expressed by a motiari, a mother or sister. Many Muria now carry little bazaar mirrors which they constantly use.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

The Jhoria have the most elaborate hair-ornaments. Bands of beads (Fig. 85) are made by the motiari with great art and taste, and are worn round

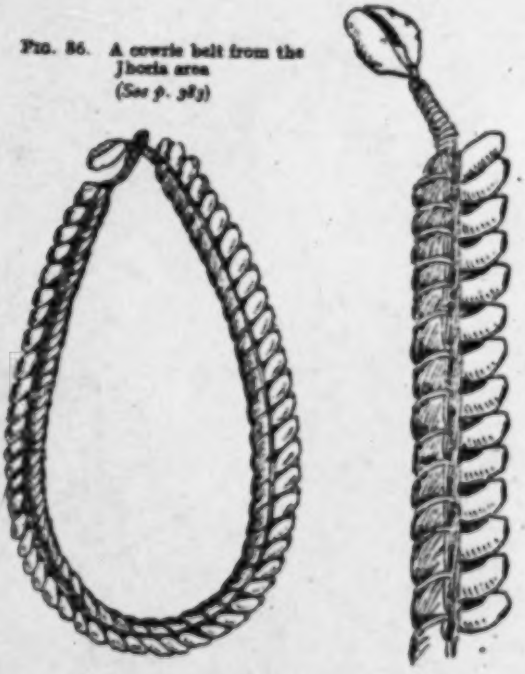

FIG. 86. A cowrie belt from the Jhoria area
(See p. 383)

the head by both boys and girls. Thick bands of blue, white and red beads, or three narrower bands, give the children a distinctive and delightful appearance. Sometimes long strings of beads are also wound over and round the turban. Boys and girls alike delight to stick feathers in their hair—feathers of junglecock, peacock, the racket-tailed drongo. Girls often wear tufts of the sago or date palms and any flowers that may be available; they have a special affection for the marigold, which is 'the most beautiful of flowers', and the crimson velvety *siliyāri*.

The motiari in the Jhoria country tie great masses of cowries over the bun into which their hair is tied, mixing them with balls of red, green and blue wool.

There is a pretty game called Atoi-mal-mal Karsana in which the girls stand in a half-circle singing 'Make my hair soft and *mal-mal*'. Each girl in turn goes round the circle smoothing and parting the hair of her fellows.

In the east of the State, in the villages round Ulera, I found many boys using hair-retainers (Fig. 92) made out of old umbrella ribs by the local Muria Lohar.

But, of course, the chief hair-ornament is the comb, a subject of such importance that I describe it in a separate section.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

The pubic hairs, reference to which can be made the most inflammatory of insults, are entirely removed by girls. They are supposed to smear the hairs with wood-ash and pull them out. 'If a woman uses a razor for this', we were told at Phauda, 'she will become very heavy after death, and the men who carry out her body will laugh and say, "She's one of those who used a razor".'[1]

III. Combs

Belle marrâte pungâr puy ânla

On a dry tree blossoms a flower—A comb

In the intimate life of chelik and motiari the comb plays a most important part. It is used every night by the motiari when they tidy the hair of the boys. It is used to titillate the skin of back and arms. In many places it is one of the most popular forms of personal adornment. Both boys and girls wear it but it is essentially a girl's possession and a girl's decoration. In Binjhli I remember seeing a row of girls walking in file; each of them had ten or fifteen combs arranged in lines on the left side of the head. But there is no rule about this. Sometimes the combs are in the back hair, sometimes on both sides. Boys wear one or two combs in the turban, or stuck in the back hair.

Different types of comb are illustrated in Figs. 67-70, 74-5, and 80-1. I believe the patterns are simply for decorative purposes and have no magical significance. Thurston has an interesting passage, which unfortunately he does not illustrate, about the strikingly similar designs of the combs of the Negritos of Malacca and the Kadir of the Anaimalai Hills.[2] Preuss had worked out a theory that the patterns were not geometrical, but consisted of a series of hieroglyphics.[3] Thurston, however, believed that the Kadir comb decorations were only conventional. The bamboo combs worn by Semang women are said to be talismans against disease,[4] but neither Kadir nor Muria combs seem to have this meaning. The Muria combs are often carved with phallic symbols—but their aim is not magical, but the very practical one of arousing sexual interest.[5]

For a girl to possess a large number of combs does not necessarily mean that she is specially popular; more probably it implies that she has a very

[1] With this may be compared a Gond proverbial saying recorded in Mandla. 'The essence lifted up the pubic hairs to make the corpse lighter, but found it made no difference.'

[2] Thurston, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 27f.

[3] K. T. Preuss, 'Die Zauberbilder Schriften der Negrito in Malaya' in *Globus*, 1899. Schebesta, however, considers that this, like the flower-pattern theory of Vaughan Stevens, is 'entirely baseless'. P. Schebesta, 'The Decorative Art of the Aborigines of the Malay Peninsula', *JRAS* (1929), p. 749. (See Fig. 76)

[4] W. W. Skeat and C. O. Blagden, *Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula* (London, 1906), Vol. I, pp. 396ff. For the magical significance of the comb, see also J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales* (London, 1890), Vol. I, p. lxxi; L. Garnett, *Greek Folk Poesy* (London, 1896), Vol. II, p. 437. The occurrence of the comb on early Celtic monuments points to the value set on it. See Macculloch, op. cit., p. 180.

[5] In several tribes, the gift of a comb is an essential part of the marriage ceremony. This is so among the Muduvar.—Thurston, op. cit., Vol. V, p. 93. The Kadir bridegroom should always make a comb and present it to his future wife just before marriage or at the end of the ceremony.—*Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 28. At a Kuki marriage, the priest presents husband and wife with small combs. 'Combs, perhaps these particular combs, are very sacred things. It is very unlucky to lose them, and man and wife only may use the same comb. When a man dies, his comb is buried with him, and his near relations break their combs and must roam with dishevelled hair for a few days before they renew them.'—Dalton, op. cit., p. 47.

2. Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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Plate LXXVIII

A motiari serves the boys

The ghotul Kotwar, son of Nari, serving food at Nayanar

[p. 388 (B)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 A W32 Gond A W32
Muria

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Fig. 87. Head-billid of sago palm fibre from Malakot (see p. 385)
Length 23"

Fig. 88. Neck-band of date palm fibre from Bayanar (see p. 385)
Length 16"

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devoted lover. Every comb, however, is a gift. When a girl wants a new one she brings two annas' worth of silver metal from the bazaar and that

[301]

Fig. 89. Cowrie head-band from Ulera. The cowries are attached to a cord made of carefully woven sago palm fibre
(See p. 388)

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

night goes to comb the hair of the boy from whom she desires a present. She does his hair with special care and whispers in his ear, 'Look, boy, I have brought some silver, make me a nice comb'. The boy says, 'I don't know how to'. The girl says, 'But of course you know'. Then the boy says, 'Well, what will you give me? Will you....?' The girl says, 'Never', meaning 'Yes', and the boy makes the comb.

In well-disciplined ghotul a boy cannot give a comb to a motiari without the permission of the Kotwar; sometimes it has actually to pass through the Kotwar's hands. For such a gift seems to be regarded as a very definite and important step in the love relations between a boy and girl, and it is considered necessary by the ghotul authorities to keep a check on such intimacies in case there is any scandal or trouble. To this witness some lines in a Paskna Pata from Bandopal:

> Where did you get a comb like that?
> You got it from the embrace of a chelik.
> One comb for once, two combs for twice.

If a comb is lost or broken, the chelik must make a new one. Otherwise his motiari says, 'How can I comb his hair?' If the Kotwar hears about it, he orders the boy to make one, and he does so at once.

Most combs are made of mahua or karraha wood. Implements used in their manufacture are a small saw, ¾" broad and 6" long, rather like a fret-saw; a *kadri* knife; a *hujji* chisel and a *tatti* adze.

The Kotwar of the Phunder ghotul made a comb for me. He took a piece of mahua wood 2' long and 3" broad, supported one end on a bit of wood and gradually planed down one end, first with the adze and then with his knife. He stood it on end and trimmed the top; then with the saw cut a number of slits 1" deep, measuring them with a twig to ensure that they were even He cut them again and again to enlarge the slits, leaving on either side of the wood a space uncut.

Now another boy came and held the wood firmly, and the Kotwar cut off 1¼" from the top with his saw, first cutting half through on one side, then turning the wood over and doing it from the other. Finally he broke the piece off and trimmed it with his knife. So far the process had taken half an hour, but the small piece of wood had taken shape as a comb. The boy now spent fifteen minutes shaping the sides, then with his chisel he enlarged the slits again and carefully cleaned the apertures between the spikes. After this, he held the comb in the hollow of his left hand and grasping the chisel firmly in the right and pressing it down hard began to decorate the comb with various patterns. By the time he had finished, he had spent two-and-a-half hours on the work, the greater part of the time being spent on the decoration.

The next morning the Kotwar went to a wild fig tree to extract its sticky, milky gum. He struck a branch with the blunt end of his axe and caught some drops of gum in a leaf-cup. He brought this back and sat down by a fire. He spread the gum on either side of the comb with a bit of straw, warmed it on the fire, applied more gum, laid the silver paper over it and rubbed it in hard with the handle of his chisel till the pattern showed. He repeated the process on the opposite side toasting the comb before the fire by sticking it on the end of his chisel. Finally he brought out the pattern clearly by pressing in the silver paper with his own finger-nails, and washed it with a straw dipped in water.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 A W32 Gond A W32
Muria

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

In some villages of the Bomra Pargana, if a comb falls down, it must be left where it is for a whole day. No one else may pick it up, and the owner should say nothing to anybody.

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Fig. 90. Wooden hair-pins from the Jhoria area
Longest pin 4½"
(*See p. 386*)

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In most places, there is a rule that when a motiari marries she should remove her combs within a certain time. Naturally if she has a dozen or more in her hair, the presents of a ghotul lover, it is only proper for her to return them to him when she marries someone else. But suppose it was her own husband who gave them to her, or another girl? Then she continues to wear them. It is not safe to say that a girl with combs is a motiari, one without combs a wife. I have seen women with three children wearing them. But usually the smart silvered ones are removed within a year of marriage.[1]

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IV. Cleanliness

The Muria are, on the whole, a clean and tidy people. The chelik and motiari especially are devoted to their toilet, wash their clothes frequently,

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[1] The Lakher and Lushai share the Muria objection to other people using their combs. 'They fear that if a man who is subject to headaches or who has a vampire soul uses another's comb', the owner may suffer in the same way.—Parry, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

The Muria wash their houses with a solution of cow-dung and water. When this has dried they apply a whitewash of clean mud from the jungle. A good

FIG. 91. Carved wooden blocks from Markabera used by the motiari as supports for their hair
(See p. 386)
Two-thirds actual size

housewife should do this every day. The motiari must keep the ghotul spotlessly clean—'This is how she learns to keep her husband's house clean when she leaves us', explained the boys at Berma.

Chelik and motiari wash their clothes frequently, almost as often as they bathe; the older people, naturally less concerned about their personal appearance, more anxious about economy, wash them less. The clothes are put in a pot with the ash of saja, dhaura, sesamum, siari-creeper or rice-chaff, and are boiled. When ready the pot is carried to the river, the clothes removed and washed by being beaten with the hands on a stone and rinsed again and again in the water. The clothes of a woman in her period, and especially her pubic cloth, are boiled on the river bank. At Tenrugaon I saw many empty pots lying on the bank and even floating in the pools which were used for this purpose, for they cannot of course be taken back to the house.

FIG. 92. Boys' hair-retainer made by a local blacksmith out of the ribs of an old umbrella
(See p. 387)

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

Plate LXXX

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291
142
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The Malko of the Koilibera ghotul

[P.396(B)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

GHOTUL DISCIPLINE

I

"We obey our ghotul laws more faithfully than the laws of Government; for we ourselves made the ghotul laws, and so we love them."

—Common Muria saying

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THE life of the chelik and motiari is strictly regulated, and when a leader is appointed one of the powers with which he is entrusted is that of judging and punishing offenders against the ghotul code. It is surprising how important a place these punishments hold in the minds of the

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FIG. 97. Comb from Palari. The two horns are of bees-wax
Width 2½"

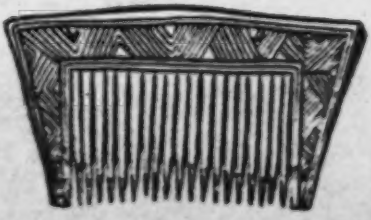

FIG. 98. Comb from Antagarh
Width 5"

FIG. 99. The *Pushpata*
Actual size

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

GHOTUL DISCIPLINE

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children. When they are initiated, the little boys are told—'You must come every day, or you'll be punished'. The girls are likewise told—'You must

[276]

FIG. 100. Tobacco pounder
Length 18"

come every day, or you'll be punished. You must massage the chelik, or you'll be punished.' And when a girl leaves the ghotul at marriage, her

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FIG. 102. A Jhoria comb from Markabera
Width 3¾"

FIG. 101. The *Dudawari-gota*
Height 6"

most tender memories, as revealed in the farewell songs, seem to be connected with punishments. '*Dudhdy gai ke lili mithai*—The cow that gives milk:

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

GHOTUL DISCIPLINE

was similarly punished for failing in his duty to make the chelik and motiari work at a wedding. As a boy Bindo punished the ghotul Kotwar for disobeying his orders to fetch the motiari in the evening; fifty years afterwards he still remembers the incident with satisfaction.

When the head of the ghotul is penalized, it is a convention in some ghotul that the motiari should beg to be punished in his stead. This happened at Chandabera when I was there, and the Sirdar was fined for not making proper arrangements for his visitors. The girls implored to be allowed to suffer for him.

FIG. 104. A sun and moon tobacco-box
Height 2½"

FIG. 105. Boy's necklace, from Kajen, of cowries strung together with red and 'silver' beads

Should the head of the ghotul turn out a bully or a slacker, the chelik and motiari take the help of the village headman and remove him. This does not happen very often because there is plenty of time to test a boy before he is appointed. But it is not always possible to judge how far power is likely to corrupt character, and scandals do occur. I have recorded a number of cases from the history of the last few years. In Mannegaon, the Leyur-Gaita was removed for bullying and abusing the children. The Malik of Esalnar was once degraded for bullying. The Kotwar of the Berma ghotul a few years ago got very much above himself and used 'to punish for four hours instead of one' until the members rebelled. They fined him a rupee, deprived him of office, made him a 'subject' with the name of Silledar, and appointed the Kandiki in his place. Recently in Kehalakot the Kotwar gave so much trouble to the girls that he was fined eight annas and removed.

Laziness also disqualifies a boy from holding high office. In Atargaon the Manjhi was dismissed 'for not working properly'. The Kokori Chalki was degraded to the rank of Kotwar for laziness and the Kotwar was appointed

Plate LXXXIII

301

The turban as box

Girls wearing cowrie head-dress

[p. 410 (a)]

Plate LXXXVI

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●301

Chelik with face decorations

The Likhen of the Timnar ghotul

[p.420 (B)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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The Nero of Tarbaili with bamboo water-contain

[p. 428(b)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

GHOTUL EXPEDITIONS

The boys then sit down and the motiari feed them. They must not, however, go to the ghotul that night; there are still ceremonies to be performed.

FIG. 120. Anklet of bells worn on dancing expeditions

The next morning the motiari husk in the ghotul the grain that the chelik have brought home. On the verandahs of some ghotul there are permanent mortars for this purpose. In the evening boys and girls will cook this together. The boys then begin to dance; they go to the Gaita's house—at Koilibera they came to my camp; but fairly soon they go home to collect chickens and pigs for sacrifice. When they have all re-assembled they set off in a ragged procession, led by the Kaser-Gaita, towards the village boundary. On the way every boy picks up a stone and carries it along with him.

When they reach the boundary, the Kaser-Gaita goes for water; others clear a space under a tree by the roadside; the boys make a pile of stones in honour of Lingo Pen near by. In some villages, each pair of boys put down two stones and one above them. The Gaita's stones are put first and then all the others in a line with finally three stones for the dog. The chickens are sacrificed before the appropriate stones. The following day the boys go to inspect the stones and if any of them have fallen over it is regarded as a fatal omen and that particular pair of dancers will die. When the Gaita returns he sprinkles a little water on the cleared space, smooths it over, makes seven piles of rice and offers incense.

The chelik stretch a rope of siari creeper across the road and tie their dancing-sticks to it. The sacred bundle of peacock feathers is tied at one end. Two chelik climb trees on opposite sides and haul up the rope until it stretches taut across the road.

Now the Gaita offers chickens, eggs and two small pigs in the usual way. At Koilibera I was interested to see how he taught two of the boys, allowing them to practise with a few of the chickens and a pig. When this was over, the boys went to the road and rather formally stripped themselves of the *Lingo-singār*, the dress worn in honour of Lingo, packing the turbans, skirts and bells into little bamboo baskets.

The Pus Kolang is almost over. The chelik return home to the village and the Gaita goes with a few of the leading boys to the shrine of the Village Mother and replaces the sacred spear of Maria Pen. Everyone has returned safely, so the priest offers a goat. The rest of the day is spent preparing for the evening feast, which is taken at about five o'clock. At Koilibera, on 25 January 1941, I attended this feast; it was a very pleasant affair. A great crowd of people sat round in a half-circle, mothers with their children, old men, little boys. The older boys served the food; the motiari saw to arrangements behind the scenes. There was an excellent meal of rice (of several different kinds collected on the trip), pork, goat and pulses. My wife and I sat with the Chowkidar and Kalingsai. Presents of meat were sent to the whole village, to Kalar, Halba and Mahara without distinction. Last of all the older chelik and the motiari got their food, and that evening they went to sleep in the ghotul.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 A W32 Gond A W32
Muria

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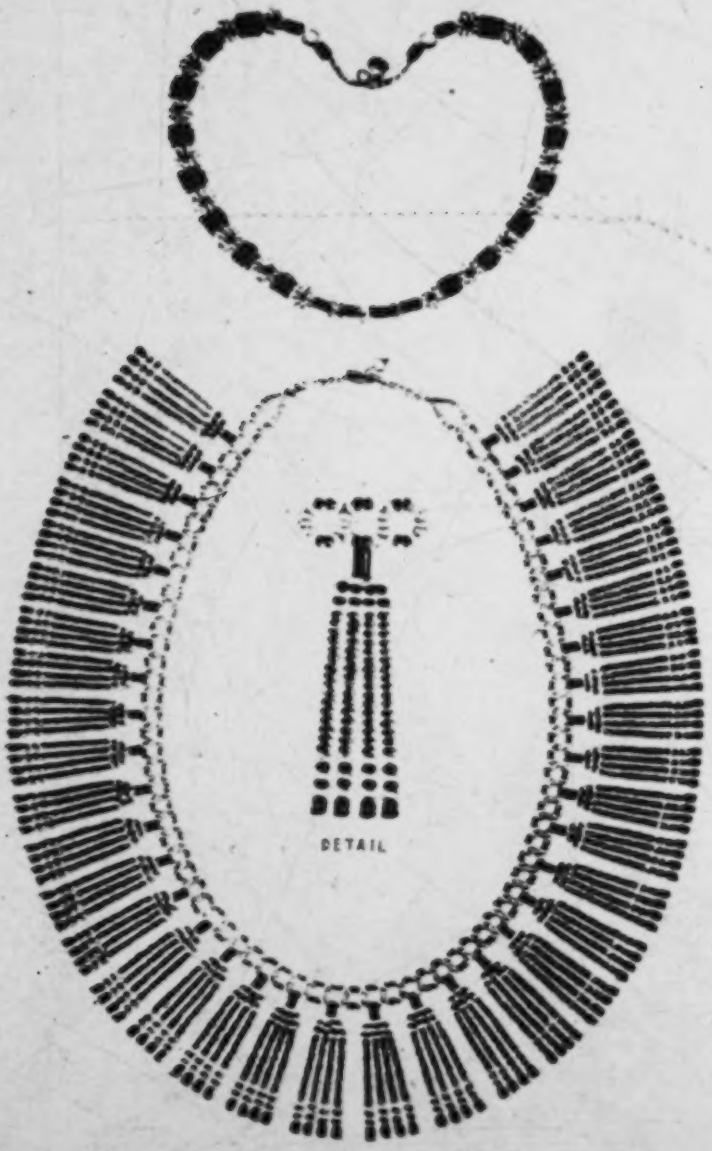

JHORIA NECKLACE AND HEAD-BAND FROM BEBAWAND

[facing p. 534]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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Plate CXII

The Kotwarin of the Kongera ghotul

The Malko of the Markabera ghotul

[p.554(B)]

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FIG. 144. *Nawgal Pannivar* necklace. The large beads are white and the small are mainly white but occasionally light blue

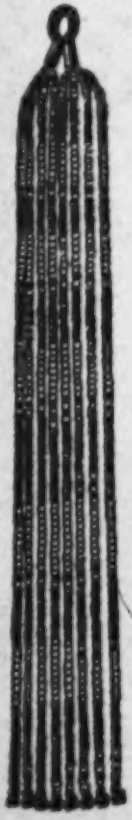

FIG. 143.
Pendant of red and white beads, attached to a ring in the ear

DETAIL

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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The Salho of the Munjmeta ghotul

Plate CXXVI

The Jhaliyaro of the Kurikhodra ghotul

[p.594(2)]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

756
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A Siraha treats his patient at Tikanpal; medical treatment led to several murders

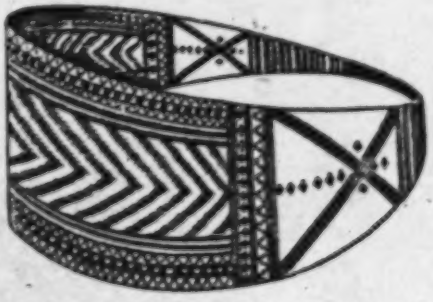
[facing p. iii]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

164 State Medical Department has done much to check the spread of the disease. Malaria, as everywhere in the Indian forests, is endemic, but few suffer from enlarged spleen. Leprosy and the venereal diseases are very rare. Skin diseases are also much less common than among the more elaborately clothed and thus dirtier people of the north.

291 Men wear a small loin-cloth and sometimes a little turban. The women tie a sort of skirt, very short, round their waists: it hangs down to the knees. The breasts are covered only with ornaments; when visiting a bazaar girls may tie a small piece of cloth round their shoulders. They often wear a thin brass fillet round the hair, and the older women use a large snood which is most becoming. Round the neck are masses of bead-necklaces, and iron or brass torcs. The bright colours of the beads and the shining brass fillets against the rich brown skin make a sight of unforgettable beauty.

[532 301] [302]



Brass fillet worn by Maria women

361 The Bison-horn Maria village is laid out on the same lines as the Gond village of the Central Provinces, unlike the communal settlements of the Hill Maria, Baiga or Juang. Each house stands in its own garden which is sometimes a substantial field, and a village may cover a very large area in consequence. Often a village is composed of anything from six to twelve small hamlets, each of which represents the grouping of a family round its patriarchal head. The little huts stand among woods, on rocky hill-sides, in the shade of spreading trees. Sometimes they appear almost submerged by waves of yellow sarson flowers or red jhira vegetable. Each village has a substantial building for the accommodation of travellers and this is used by the unmarried boys as a dormitory. The unmarried girls also sleep together, some-

[485 883 361]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

241
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Girls threshing grain with their feet at Mokhpal

[FACING p. 14]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

342
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Oyami Masa with family on the scene of the death of the younger wife

192
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Oyami Masa with his surviving wife

[Facing p. 15]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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A girl cleans grain in a field at Garmiri; failure in preparing food is sometimes a cause of tragedy

[FACING p.20]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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Bandi of Mokhpal: the typical Maria wife

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Habka Masa, jealous of his wife

[Facing p. 21]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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Girl cleaning grain at Tikanpal before a decorated door

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Hingo, a Maria girl of Kowali

[facing p. 28]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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Girl with basket at Marenda

Girls breaking pods at Khutepal

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[facing p. 29]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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Girls fetching water at Bastenar

[Facing p. 32]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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Maria girl of Mokhpal. Domestic life is usually happy: the rare infidelities quickly lead to revenge

[Facing p. 33]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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Dulha of Gadapal with bow and arrow

Boys catching a bat at Khutepal

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[facing p.49]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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'Rice in the mouth and curry in the hand.'
Mother and child figure in several murder cases

[Facing p. 65]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER SIX

THE CAUSES OF CRIME: MARITAL INFIDELITY

I

[836] The Maria allow their women a great deal of freedom in
157 their pre-nuptial period, but for matrimonial relationships they have a strict regard. They are jealous and possessive by temperament, passionate as lovers,[1] suspicious and

[301]

Maria girls' neck-band

exacting husbands. Divorce is rare; adultery is dangerous, a crime the end of which cannot be foreseen.

837 Adultery is dangerous, for unless proper precautions are taken the ancestors of the household and the clan-god may

[1] But as elsewhere in India 'lust-murder' does not occur. 'Lust-murder, as one of the phenomena of psychopathia sexualis, appears to be better known in the more highly cultured countries of the West than in the East, where capital offences have their basis in less recondite mental processes'. S. M. Edwardes, *Crime in India* (Oxford, 1924), p. 28.

[p. 81]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

their long day's work. That night at supper Wango accused Kuma of allowing Palke to flirt with him and of distracting her affections from himself. The boy seems to have been

[301]

Necklace in Muria style, part of a dancing outfit

genuinely upset at his betrothed's lack of interest in him and her frigid attitude. He threatened to shoot her with an arrow. Kuma told his uncle Risami about this, and the old man got angry and declared that it was disgraceful of Wango to accuse a girl betrothed to him of so serious a crime as incest, and hit the boy twice. Wango caught hold of his future father-in-law, but the others separated them. So Wango walked out of the house. Risami followed to bring him back, for he had no desire to lose such a useful person

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

1942
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Such young girls are very sensitive, unkindness or abuse may quickly drive them to suicide

[FACING p. 128]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

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Married Maria girl. The love of such young wives for the 'mother's house' sometimes leads to disaster

[FACING p. 160]